

Why Focusing On Being Likeable Can Sabotage Our Work



Work is a social environment. Our coworkers can be the people that we socialize with the most. In this situation, it is natural to want to feel liked. However, you can sabotage your work by trying too hard to be accepted.

You may put yourself at risk in some of the ways outlined in this article:

We Develop Unrealistic Expectations

Not everyone is going to like us. That is impossible. If you think so, you are going to be disappointed and stressed at work. Rather than focusing on your coworker's approval, strengthen your relationship as a team.

Solution:

There are more productive ways of building a friendship than small talk at the water cooler. Nurture meaningful relationships that helps reach company goals. Working together as a team can promote positivity that builds strong relationships. There might be a company goal that has been pushed to the side for the past year. Communicate with others in your team with numerous skill sets to complete the project. Besides, people tend to like people they work well with and can get things accomplished to make themselves and the team look good.

You Become Over Critical

We are our own worst critics. If we are constantly comparing ourselves to others it is easy to think that we are not smart, fast, or strategic enough. Self-criticism often occurs if you are focusing on being liked.

Solution:

Everyone has a unique skill set. What is yours?

Now, set boundaries according to your job description. You do not have to do favors for co-workers just to earn approval. This does not mean that you will not have to do hard work or can't be flexible. The difference is compromising your needs to do someone else's job, which earns you approval, but may derail your own work. Go above and beyond in your own position.

We Dread Work

You may have landed your dream job. The salary is enough to support your family and vacation, and the commute is only a few minutes from your house. This is the job that you have been waiting for!

However, any job can be ruined if your energy is focused on being liked. We become uncomfortable around our coworkers and experience social anxiety.

Solution:

Focus on collaboration instead of being liked. Collaboration empowers us to solve work issues together. If you focus on being liked, you will probably feel alone and dissatisfied. To accomplish collaboration, you must have an openness to learning. If you collaborate successfully, you may be able to solve more work issues and end up being more liked in the process.

If you need help building a company with a healthy company culture, contact me, Jeff King at jking@rqfocus.com. I am a life sciences recruiter in the Bay Area.